



Summary of online survey responses: Draft recommendations from the Sustainable Recreation Work Group

Conducted September – October 2009

The following is a summary of the online survey the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) conducted in September and October of this year. We asked the survey respondents to give us their thoughts on each of the proposed recommendations. We received 255 surveys. The responses, in full, can be downloaded from the Sustainable Recreation Work Group's main page. Go to DNR's home page at www.dnr.wa.gov and then follow the link to "Sustainable Recreation Work Group" under "Featured Topics."

FUNDING Goal: Provide sustainable funding for outdoor recreation on lands managed by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) from a variety of sources.

A. User Fees

- Strong support for having a fee based, pay-to-play structure — **120**
- Sizeable opposition to having fees of any kind — **36**

Fee structure:

- Prefer the use of a yearly permit — **29**
- Of those preferring a yearly permit, specified that this could be a multi-agency pass — **16**
- Fees should be tied to a site/service being provided to the recreational user — **12**

Concerns/other specific comments about fees:

- Fees could result in less public use of the land, including people at lower incomes — **16**
- Any fee should be kept cheap in order to make it easy for people to buy — **12**
- Any fee system would be too costly to implement relative to the revenue that would be generated — **11**
- NOVA funds need to be reallocated back to the NOVA program — **14**

B. Recreational Immunity, Part 1

- Strong support for changing the recreation immunity law (as to fees) — **135**
- Some of the support depends on the type of fee being charged — **19**
- Some opposition to changing the recreational immunity law (as to fees) — **28**

Concerns/specific comments:

- Want to ensure that any change results in more access for recreation — **8**
- Concern that change could result in increased ORV use on state lands — **7**
- Any change in the recreational immunity law should apply to all lands — **6**

C. Concessions

- Solid support for having concessionaires on DNR managed-lands — **84**
- Significant opposition against having concessionaires on DNR managed-lands — **64**

Concerns/specific comments:

- High importance stressed in having strict oversight of any concessionaire by DNR — **24**
- Concern that concessionaire operations would result in the loss of DNR's niche of providing small primitive campsites — **19**
- Concern that concessionaires would result in either a higher cost to recreational users, or a loss in the quality of recreational experience — **11**
- Concern that implementing a concessionaire program would be inefficient as to costs compared to services being provided — **11**
- Concern of privatizing public lands to for-profit businesses — **9**

D. Increase the NOVA Refund

- Strong support for increasing NOVA refund — **131**
- Sizeable opposition against increasing NOVA — **42**

Concerns/specific comments:

- High importance stressed regarding securing NOVA funds for the NOVA program, both in the current biennium and the future — **35**
- Concern that increasing NOVA funds would result in an increase of environmental impacts from recreation, including ORVs — **21**

E. Lottery

- Solid support for using the lottery to fund recreation on DNR-managed lands — **97**
- Significant opposition against using the lottery to fund recreation on DNR-managed lands — **78**

Concerns/specific comments:

- Moral concern of associating DNR recreation with gambling — **17**
- Concern that allocating lottery dollars to DNR would result in decreased funding for the current lottery beneficiaries — **7**

F. License Tab Opt-out Donation

- Strong support for having excess funds from tab-opt out go to DNR — **96**
- Sizeable opposition against having excess funds from tab-opt out go towards DNR — **34**

Concerns/specific comments:

- Concern that the use of the tab opt-out should be eliminated altogether — **11**
- Concern that all funding from the tab opt-out needs to be kept with State Parks — **9**
- DNR should have their own specific tab opt-out (or opt-in) option — **7**

G. Reallocate Sales Tax on Outdoor Sporting Goods

- Strong support for allocating a portion of the sales tax attributed to sporting goods to DNR — **124**
- Sizeable opposition against allocating a portion of the sales tax attributed to sporting goods to DNR — **34**

Concerns/specific comments:

- Concern that the tax allocation would be too difficult and cumbersome — **14**
- Concern that sporting goods being taxed are not necessarily those which will be used on DNR-managed lands — **10**
- Concern that the tax reallocation would be taking away from other government services — **10**
- Concern that tax funding would result in an increase of environmental impacts from recreation, including ORVs — **10**

H. New Statutory Trust Lands

- Strong support for creating a new statutory trust to generate revenue for funding recreation on DNR-managed lands — **123**
- Some opposition against creating a new statutory trust to generate revenue for funding recreation on DNR-managed lands — **26**
- Some did not feel like they understood the funding option enough to determine if they are in support or in opposition of the option — **26**

Concerns/specific comments:

- Concern that the cost to purchase the lands for the trust would be too expensive — **10**
- Concern about environmental impacts as a result of managing lands to generate revenue — **9**

ACCESS GOAL 1: Ensure that DNR-managed lands provide safe, environmentally sustainable and enjoyable recreational opportunities for a diverse recreating public.

A. Education and Enforcement

- Very strong support for creating a dedicated fund for an integrated education and enforcement presence on DNR-managed lands — **150**
- Some opposition against creating a dedicated fund for an integrated education and enforcement presence on DNR-managed lands — **20**

Concerns/specific comments:

- DNR can benefit from better integrating volunteers into their education and enforcement program — **14**
- A greater education and enforcement presence on DNR-managed lands is needed to help address safety and environmental concerns — **12**
- Concern that any increased education and enforcement program would be too costly — **11**

B. Unauthorized Trails and Strategic Planning

- Strong support for having a strategic plan for addressing recreational areas, as created by the Work Group — **104**
- Sizeable opposition against having a strategic plan for addressing recreational areas, as created by the Work Group — **33**

Concerns/specific comments

- Significant concern about creating an incentive for people to build undesignated trails, by officially adopting them instead of ensuring they remain closed — **44**
- Undesignated trails have value and should be open in most cases, as they may be the result of not having enough designated trail opportunities — **33**

C. Recreational Immunity, Part 2

- Very strong support for changing the recreation immunity law as to “...latent conditions..” — **164**
- Some opposition to changing the recreational immunity law as to “...latent conditions..” — **15**

Concerns/specific comments:

- People need to take sole-responsibility for their actions while recreating — **13**

Access Goal 2: Obtain more public access to DNR-managed uplands and aquatic lands.

A. Purchase Access

- Strong support for creating an account which state agencies can use to purchase public access to state lands — **147**
- Some opposition to creating an account which state agencies can use to purchase public access to state lands — **22**

Concerns/specific comments:

- Concern that the idea would be too costly to implement — **27**

B. Block Up Lands

- Strong support for DNR continuing to block up trust lands to provide better management and recreational access — **142**
- Some opposition against DNR continuing to block up trust lands to provide better management and recreational access — **25**

Concerns/specific comments:

- DNR should consider certain factors, such as environmental impacts, neighboring properties and recreational opportunities, before blocking up lands — **15**